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SUBJECT: JERUSALEM MEDIA REACTION (7/10): VANISHING HOPES FOR
PALESTINIAN UNITY

Main Stories:

Under banner headlines, the three dailies announce Israeli approval of the construction of 1,800 settlement units in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Jabal Abu Ghunaym (Har Homa). Al-Quds reports that official spokesperson of the Palestinian Presidency Nabil Abu Rudayna responded on July 9, by issuing a warning of the possible negative effects of the action on Palestinian-Israeli negotiations. Al-Hayat Al-Jadida's lead photo shows ongoing construction "to expand" the Israeli settlement.

Al-Ayyam's front page reports that Israeli military broke up demonstrations against the separation barrier in several areas of the West Bank on July 9. The demonstrations marked the 4th anniversary of the International Court of Justice ruling that the separation barrier is illegal under international law. Several Palestinians were injured in clashes with Israeli Defense Forces, reporting notes. In related coverage in all papers, Israeli human rights group B'Tselem said on July 9, that the separation barrier has not been rerouted in accordance with a 2004 ruling by the Israeli High Court of Justice. The organization added that the barrier will include 12% of West Bank land and 60 settlements to be annexed to Israel. The three dailies also highlight that a Palestinian tried on July 9 to destroy part of the barrier with a bulldozer in an area next to Qalandiya, near Ramallah. Israeli Defense Forces prevented the action, according to the papers.

Palestinian Authority Premier Fayyad's joint press conference with Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs Frattini captures front page headlines in all dailies. During the July 9 press conference in Ramallah, Fayyad condemned a recent Israeli military operation in the West Bank city of Nablus and Israeli settlement activities. Frattini announced an additional 20 million Euros in assistance to

the Palestinians, the articles report.

Al-Ayyam writes that the Hamas delegation to Cairo delivered a report to Egyptian officials detailing Israeli violations of the truce agreement in the Gaza Strip. According to a Hamas leader interviewed by Al-Ayyam on July 9, Hamas has asked for an urgent meeting to discuss issues concerning the Rafah crossing point in the southern Gaza Strip. In related coverage in all papers, Palestinian Authority President Abbas emphasized during an internal meeting on July 9, the importance of Egyptian mediation in and subsequent launch of Palestinian national dialogue.

On an inside page, Al-Quds briefly notes the July 9 visit of General Fraser to the northern West Bank city of Janin. During his visit, General Fraser met with the Governor of Janin and the Chief Commander of the Palestinian Security Forces. The Janin Governor briefed the Fraser about the general situation, including civil and economic issues, in Janin Governorate, according to Al Quds.

BLOCK QUOTES:

¶1. Independent Al-Quds prints its daily editorial entitled, "Truce talks, dialogue, and agreement" (7/10): "...it is obvious that the possibility of an agreement... or even a meeting [between Fatah and Hamas] has almost disappeared... The truce [with Israel in the Gaza Strip] will not last long for one simple and clear reason: Palestinian and general Arab weakness combined with Israel's ability to control the military, political and economic spheres. We have to

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face this fact and stop selling... illusions..."

¶2. Al-Ayyam runs its main editorial under the title, "Why do we have to wait so long?" (7/10): "[Palestinian Authority President] Mahmud Abbas stirred the stillness... towards dialogue [with Hamas] after the Yemen initiative... Five months later, everyone is waiting for Abbas to... reactivate his proposal... to remove obstacles preventing dialogue to end Palestinian division... Internal Palestinian division is a fact, and all parties pretend to reject it, but their behavior is causing it to deepen. So, can anyone tell us who is benefiting from this split, other than Israel?

Walles